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DATE MAILED: 10/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/720,689

Applicant(s)

YANAGAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph G Ustaris

Art Unit

2616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-41 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 23, 25, 27, 30, 35, 36, 38, and 41 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Specification***

1. The abstract is objected to because of the following informalities:
  - The abstract exceeds the maximum word length of 150 words. Please revise the abstract's contents in order to meet the proper format of an abstract.

Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Objections***

Claims 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 23, 25, 27, 30, 35, 36, 38, and 41 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 because of the following informalities. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 7 recites the limitations "the notification request" in line 2 page 114, "the display screen" in line 5 page 114, "the primary response" in lines 5-6 page 114, "the updated version information" in lines 6-7, and "the secondary response" in line 7 page 114. There is insufficient antecedent basis for those limitations in the claim. The examiner will read "the notification request" as --a notification request --, "the display screen" as --a display screen--, "the primary response" as --a primary response --, "the updated version information" as --updated version information--, and "the secondary response" as --a secondary response --.

Claim 8 recites the limitation "the updated object information" in line 12. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the updated object information" as --updated object information--.

Claim 10 recites the limitation "the state information" in line 19. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the state information" as --state information--.

Claim 11 recites the limitation "the state information" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the state information" as --state information--.

Claim 13 recites the limitation "the operation screen information" in lines 19-20. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the operation screen information" as --state information--.

Claim 23 recites the limitation "the function table version information" in lines 18-19. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the function table version information" as --a function table version information--.

Claim 25 recites the limitation "the notification range" in line 12. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the notification range" as --a notification range--.

Claim 27 recites the limitation "the function table version information" in line 4. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the function table version information" as --a function table version information--.

Claim 30 recites the limitation "the updated information" in line 15. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the updated information" as --updated information--.

Claim 35 recites the limitations "the notification range" in line 8 and "the primary response" in lines 9-10. There is insufficient antecedent basis for those limitations in the claim. The examiner will read "the notification range" as --a notification range-- and "the primary response" as --a primary response --.

Claim 36 recites the limitations "the secondary response" in line 14 and "the second notification request" in line 16. There is insufficient antecedent basis for those limitations in the claim. The examiner will read "the secondary response" as --a secondary response-- and "the second notification request" as --a second notification request--.

Claim 38 recites the limitation "the menu list response" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The examiner will read "the menu list response" as --a menu list response --.

Claim 41 recites the limitations "the primary and secondary responses" in line 4 and "the updated apparatus information" in lines 7-8. There is insufficient antecedent basis for those limitations in the claim. The examiner will read "the primary and secondary responses" as --primary and secondary responses-- and "the updated apparatus information" as --updated apparatus information--.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 6-8, 14-22, 24, 27-29, 31, 33, 34, 39, and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Teece (US005537605A).

Regarding claim 1, Teece discloses a system for controlling at least one piece of equipment via a control unit. The system is a “network control system in an AVC system to which a plurality of AV apparatuses are connected via a transmission line” (See Fig. 1; column 3 line 66 – column 4 line 2). The system comprises a “controller equipped with a user interface” (See Fig. 1, Control Unit) and a “device to be controlled” (See Fig. 1, Nth Controllable Unit). The “device has apparatus information in device and version information indicative of a version of the information inside the device” (See Fig. 4, M, D, VN; column 2 lines 1-19, 40-54; column 6 lines 36-53), wherein inherently the VN or “version information” is updated when the “apparatus information in device is updated” (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62). Furthermore, the “controller reads the apparatus information and the version information inside the device from the device” (See column 9 lines 15-47) and is able to “detect a change inside the device by the version information” (See column 11 lines 40-62).

Regarding claim 6, “the information of the device inside is operation screen information which shows an operation screen of the device” (See column 2 lines 41-54). Furthermore, “the device has the operation screen information of the device and the version information showing the version of the operation screen information” (See Fig. 4, M and VN; column 6 lines 36-53), where it is updated as discussed in claim 1 above.

The "controller reads the operation screen information and the version information from the device" (See column 9 lines 15-47) and is able to "detect a change of the operation screen of the device by the version information" (See column 11 lines 40-62).

Regarding claim 7, "the operation screen information comprises a plurality of objects" (See column 2 lines 41-61, menu and bar charts). The "controller issues a notification request to the device for requesting notification on changes of the operation screen information when the device operation screen information of the device is displayed on a display screen" (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62). The control unit "receives the version information as a primary response to the notification request" (See column 11 lines 55-57, lines 60-62) and "receives updated version information as a secondary response to the notification request when the operation screen information is changed in the device" (See column 11 lines 58-60).

Regarding claim 8, "the secondary response from the device contains the updated version information and updated object information" (See Fig. 4; column 11 lines 58-60).

Claim 14 contains the limitations of claim 6 (where in the controllable unit or "device" performs the functions claimed in claim 14) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim. Furthermore, inherently "the change of the operation screen is indicated by the version information" (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62).

Claim 15 contains the limitations of claim 6 (where in the control unit or "controller" performs the functions claimed in claim 15) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim.

Claim 16 contains the limitations of claim 7 (where in the controllable unit or "device" performs the functions claimed in claim 16) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim.

Claim 17 contains the limitations of claim 7 (where in the control unit or "controller" performs the functions claimed in claim 17) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim.

Regarding claim 18, "the object comprises invariable objects" (See column 2 lines 42-54), wherein the menus define the functions of the controllable unit and are not "varied irrespective of the device state" and "variable objects" (See column 3 lines 55-61), wherein the bar charts are "varied in accordance with the device state" to reflect the current operating parameters and conditions of the controllable units (See column 5 lines 30-38). The control unit "reads the objects from the device, carries out caching to the invariable objects, and displays the objects on the display screen" (See Fig. 2, RAM 36; column 5 lines 23-38, column 9 lines 47-50).

Regarding claim 19, each of the objects, i.e. menus and bar charts, are defined by menu descriptors or "invariable data set" and operation/control parameters or "variable data set" (See column 5 lines 30-38, column 6 lines 36-53, and column 12 lines 15-20). The control unit "carries out caching to the objects belonging to the invariable data set" (See Fig. 2, RAM 36; column 9 lines 47-65).



Claim 20 contains the limitations of claim 18 (where in the controllable unit or “device” performs the functions claimed in claim 20) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim.

Claim 21 contains the limitations of claim 18 (where in the control unit or “controller” performs the functions claimed in claim 21) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim.

Regarding claim 22, Teece discloses a system for controlling at least one piece of equipment via a control unit. The system is a “network control system in an AVC system to which a plurality of AV apparatuses are connected via a transmission line” (See Fig. 1; column 3 line 66 – column 4 line 2). The system comprises a “controller equipped with a user interface” (See Fig. 1, Control Unit) and a “device to be controlled” (See Fig. 1, Nth Controllable Unit). The “device has a function information table that shows a device function and state” (See column 2 lines 1-19 and 41-61), wherein the control structure definitions has “component elements constituting the function information table, and element version information that shows a version of the component elements of the function information table” (See Fig. 4, M, D, VN; column 2 lines 1-19, 40-54; column 6 lines 36-53). Furthermore, the control unit “detects changes of information in the function information table using the element version information when the controller uses the information in the function information table of the device” (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62).

Regarding claim 24, the control structure definitions includes multiple menus or “plurality of components”, wherein each menu has a version number or “element version

information" (See Fig. 4, M0, M1, M2, and VN). The control unit is able to "detect changes of the information of the component information using the element version information of the component when the controller uses the information in the components of the device" (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62), wherein the menu descriptors and version numbers are within the control structure definitions or "function information table".

Regarding claim 27, the version numbers of the menus also serve as "function table version information", wherein the version numbers are within the control structure definitions or "function table information".

Regarding claim 28, "the components are menus" (See column 2 lines 41-54).

Regarding claim 29, "the components are display parts" (See column 2 lines 55-61 and column 5 lines 23-38).

Regarding claim 31, Teece discloses a system for controlling at least one piece of equipment via a control unit. The system is a "network control system in an AVC system to which a plurality of AV apparatuses are connected via a transmission line" (See Fig. 1; column 3 line 66 – column 4 line 2). The system comprises a "controller equipped with a user interface" (See Fig. 1, Control Unit) and a "device to be controlled" (See Fig. 1, Nth Controllable Unit). The controllable unit has "apparatus information holding means for holding apparatus information in device, said apparatus information containing apparatus configuration information which indicates device configuration information and containing operation screen information which indicates a function and condition of the device and for configuring an operation screen of the device" (See Fig.

3, CSD 54; column 2 lines 1-19 and 41-61). The controllable unit inherently has a "version information generation managing means" that "generates version information indicative of a change" for the menu descriptors in order to ensure that the control unit has a valid menu (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62). The control unit sends a "notification request to the device in response to the change of the apparatus information in device" (See column 10 lines 55-59), a "response from the device in response to said notification request contains the version information" (See Fig. 4; column 10 lines 59-64).

Regarding claim 33, the "operation screen information" is made up of menus or "table of contents information" and bar charts or items or "action state information that indicate the device functions and state" (See column 2 lines 1-19 and 41-61). The menus and bar charts or items are also "objects" which are identified by and ID number or "identifiers" (See column 6 lines 36-54). The "objects" are menus or "function menu", bar charts or "display part" or also known as "still picture data", and the menus can also be in the form of text or "text data" (See column 9 lines 55-60).

Regarding claim 34, the control unit has a means for "storing and controlling the apparatus information and version information in relation to each other when the controller reads the apparatus information in the device and the version information" (See column 9 lines 48-50, column 10 lines 40-64, and column 11 lines 40-62).

Claim 39 contains the limitations of claim 31 (wherein the controllable unit performs the method) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

Regarding claim 41, the controllable unit sends a "primary response" (See column 11 lines 55-57, lines 60-62) and a "secondary response" (See column 11 lines 58-60) to the control unit "in response to the notification request from the controller". The control unit is able to judge "that the version information is changed, and using an identifier of updated apparatus information contained in the secondary response, reads the updated apparatus information and updates the version information in the controller (See Fig. 4; column 10 lines 40-64 and column 11 lines 40-62).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2-5, 10-13, 23, 25, 26, 30, and 35-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teece (US005537605A).

Claim 2 contains the limitations of claim 1 and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim. Furthermore, "the apparatus information of the device inside is state information showing a condition of the device" (See column 2 lines 55-61). The control unit is able to "read the state information" (See column 35-40). However, Teece does not disclose that the operation/conditions parameters or "state information" have "version information that shows the version of the state information".

Teece does disclose that menu descriptors have version numbers or "version information" and further discloses that alternative data structures can be used (See Fig. 4; column 6 lines 36-61). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the operation/conditions parameters as disclosed by Teece to have "version information that shows the version of the state information", in order to provide a means of distinguishing current operation/conditions parameters from previous operation/conditions parameters. Furthermore, the "version information" is updated as described in claim 1 above.

Claim 3 contains the limitations of claims 2 and 7 and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims. Wherein, the verification process can be performed when updating the bar chart on the display using the operation/conditions parameters (See column 10 lines 35-40 and column 11 line 63 – column 12 line 6).

Regarding claim 4, the control unit inherently reads the new operation/conditions parameters or "state information" when it is received within the "second response" as discussed in claim 7 above, which is after the first response as discussed in claim 7 above or "the controller reads the state information between the primary response and the secondary response".

Claim 5 contains the limitations of claims 3 and 8 (wherein the secondary response would carry the new operation/conditions parameters or "updated state formation") and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

Claim 10 contains the limitations of claim 2 (where in the controllable unit or "device" performs the functions claimed in claim 10) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim.

Claim 11 contains the limitations of claim 2 (where in the control unit or "controller" performs the functions claimed in claim 11) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim.

Claim 12 contains the limitations of claims 3 and 4 (where in the controllable unit or "device" performs the functions claimed in claim 12) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

Claim 13 contains the limitations of claim 3 and 4 (where in the control unit or "controller" performs the functions claimed in claim 13) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

Claim 23 contains the limitations of claim 22 and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim. However, Teece does not disclose that the control structure definitions or "function information table" have "function table version information that indicates the version of the function table" and for the control unit to "detect changes of the information in the function information table using the function table version information".

Teece does disclose that menu descriptors have version numbers or "version information" and further discloses that alternative data structures can be used (See Fig. 4; column 6 lines 36-61). Furthermore, Teece discloses that the control unit uses the version number to validate the current menu (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11

lines 53-62). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the control structure definitions as disclosed by Teece to have a "function table version information that indicates the version of the function table" and for the control unit to "detect changes of the information in the function information table using the function table version information", in order to provide a means of distinguishing current control structure definitions from previous control structure definitions thereby providing the most up to date menus and control parameters for the control unit. Furthermore, the control unit is also able to "detect changes of information of the component elements using the element version information when the controller uses the information in the function information table of the device" as discussed in claim 22 above (See Fig. 4; column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62).

Regarding claim 25, the "controller issues a notification request to the device for requesting notification on changes" (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62), wherein the request can be made to multiple controllable units or "within a notification range" (See column 7 line 62 – column 8 line 9), "when the controller uses the information in the function table of the device" (See column 10 lines 41-64). The control unit receives "the element version information corresponding to the notification range, as the primary response to the notification request" (See column 11 lines 55-57, lines 60-62) and "if the information within the notification range is changed, the controller receives the updated element version information as the secondary response to the notification request" (See column 11 lines 58-60).

Claim 26 contains the limitations of claims 4 and 25 and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

Claim 30 contains the limitations of claims 5 and 25 (wherein the “secondary response would carry the “updated element version information” as well as the menu descriptors or “updated information” (See Fig. 4)) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

Regarding claim 35, a “notification request issued from the controller contains information of a notification range” (See column 10 lines 44-54, column 11 lines 53-62, column 7 line 62 – column 8 line 9), wherein the “notification range” indicates the range which the control unit “hopes to bring the information in agreement” with all the controllable devices that was within the notification range. The control unit receives from the controllable unit or “device” a “primary response that contains the version information corresponding to the notification range” (See column 11 lines 55-57, lines 60-62; column 7 line 62 – column 8 line 9).

Regarding claim 36, the control unit receives a “secondary response from the device to the notification request” (See column 11 lines 58-60) and the control unit is able to detect a change (See column 10 lines 55-57). The control unit sends a “second notification request to the device before the changed object is requested” (See column 10 lines 55-64).

Regarding claim 37, the control structure definitions contain “the operation screen information that has a function menu set list” (See Fig. 4, row MO), where the “function menu set list contains function table version information” (See Fig. 4, row MO,



box VN). Furthermore, "each of the function menu lists has element version information" (See Fig. 4, row M1, row M2, box VN). Inherently the controllable unit inherently the "function table version information and the element version information" are generated by the "version information generation managing means" as discussing in claim 31 above.

Regarding claim 38, the controllable unit sends responses to the control unit from the control structure definitions (CSDs). The CSDs contain "version information that is included in the menu list response" (See Fig. 4, row M0, box VN). However, Teece does not disclose that the "display part response" and the "object response" include "version information".

Teece does disclose that menu descriptors have version numbers or "version information" and further discloses that alternative data structures can be used (See Fig. 4; column 6 lines 36-61). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the operation/conditions parameters or "display part response" (See column 2 lines 55-61) and the rotary control device (RDI) description or "object response" (See Fig. 4, RDI) as disclosed by Teece to have "version information", in order to provide a means of distinguishing current parameters/descriptions from previous parameters/descriptions.

Claims 9, 32, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teece (US005537605A) in view of Jerding et al. (US006792616B1).

Claim 9 contains the limitations of claim 1 and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to that claim. However, Teece does not disclose that the "version information is a counter value which is incremented every time the information of the device inside is updated".

Jerding et al. (Jerding) discloses a system for updating version numbers of various tables. Jerding discloses that each time a table is updated, the table's version number is incremented or "version information is a counter value which is incremented every time the information of the device inside is updated" (See column 5 lines 48-67). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the version number within the controllable unit disclosed by Teece to be "a counter value which is incremented every time the information of the device inside is updated", as taught by Jerding, in order to provide a means of distinguishing the various versions from another and to also provide an easy means of identifying the most recent version.

Claim 32 contains the limitations of claims 9 and 31 (where inherently the controllable device has a "version information generation means" in order to successfully provide the version number) and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

Claim 40 contains the limitations of claims 9 and 39 and is analyzed as previously discussed with respect to those claims.

**Conclusion**

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Please take note of Takahashi et al. (US005887193A) and Dara-Abrams et al. (US006456892B1) for their similar methods of control various devices over a network.

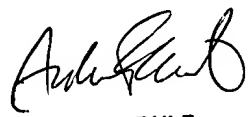
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph G Ustaris whose telephone number is 703-305-0377. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30-5PM; Alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew I Faile can be reached on 703-305-4380. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
JGU

October 15, 2004

  
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